(a) the policy for procurement of medicines under the National Rural Health Mission scheme;

(b) whether Government is aware that the restriction of turn over clause has stopped the competitiveness of small scale units; and

(c) if so, what is the comparative prices of medicines procured under the National Rural Health Mission scheme, year-wise till date?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Funds are released to States and Union Territories by National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) for procurement of medicines. The States and Union Territories make procurement of medicines as per their existing procurement policy.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

Pictorial warning on tabacco packets

1587. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is implementing the pictorial warning on tobacco packs strictly;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Yes. The Government of India has notified "the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labeling) Rules, 2008" *vide* GSR No. 182 dated 15th March, 2008. These rules came into force from 31st May, 2009. As per these Rules, every package of cigarette or any other tobacco product manufactured after 31st May, 2009 in the country shall have the specified health warning, as specified in the said rule. Letter at the level of Secretary/Joint Secretary have been sent to excise, customs and Health officials concerned for strict compliance of aforesaid Rule.

(c) Does not arise.

Health mission for people of urban slums

1588. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to improve and monitor the health mission of around 22 crore people living urban slums in around 429 cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the people of slums will feel the improved condition?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) A proposal to address the health care needs of urban poor in a dedicated and focused manner is under consideration in consultation with all related Departments. After due deliberations, a decision will be taken in this regard.

Shortage of doctors and para medical staff

1589. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted any survey to find out the shortage of qualified doctors and other staff in the medical profession;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how the Government proposes to tide over the current and impending human resource shortage in the medical profession?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) No. However, as per information furnished by Medical Council of India? allopathic doctors population ratio works out to 1:1584 approximately. In addition there more than six lakh practitioners of Indian system of medicine and Homoeopathy. Taking all these number together, the doctor population ratio comes to 1:860 approximately.

(c) The Government of India has proposed the following steps to meet the growing need of medical professionals:-

(i) Medical Council of India Regulations are reviewed with regard to land requirement, teacher-student ratio and Introduction of public-private partnership which will facilitate starting of more medical colleges.

(ii) The National Rural Health Mission has been operationalised with the aim of providing accessible and reliable primary health care facilities especially to poor and the vulnerable section of the population.

(iii) Establishment of Auxiliary Nurse Midwifery (ANM) and General Nursing and Midwifery (GNM) schools m those districts which are not having both these training programmes.

(iv) Establishment of post graduation Nurstag (M.Sc Nursing) Institutions.

(v) There are 908 Pharmacy Institutions with an intake of 54133 students per annum and a new namely Pharm. D of 6 years duration from 2008-09 academic session as registerable qualification under the Pharmacy Act has been introduced.

Leprosy eradication

1590. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has been able to eradicate leprosy in the country;

(b) what is the number of leprosy patients, State-wise; and